

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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INFORMATION  
October 8, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: Mr. Clift

SUBJECT: Soviet Use of Declassified Documents

A recent article in the Soviet magazine International Life by USA Institute associate G. Trofimenko provides a fresh reminder that the Soviets keep close tabs on documents declassified by this government, even those which are non-sensitive and as much as 30 years old, and make use of these documents in propaganda attacking U.S. policies.

In his article "Away from a Policy of Confrontation Toward a Policy of Coexistence" in the August issue of International Life, Trofimenko makes extensive use of declassified U.S. documents, including -- among others -- the following citations:

-- "George Kennan, the U.S. charge d'affairs in the USSR, wrote on February 22, 1946 in a secret dispatch to the State Department: 'This political force [the Soviet Union] evidently is not dependent on considerations of reality in its basic reactions.... The problems of how to control this force is undoubtedly the biggest task of any which our diplomacy has ever encountered or will encounter. It is precisely this that our political general staff must use as their starting point at the present critical time'."

-- "And although G. Kennan asserted in the same document that 'he cannot suggest all the answers,' he formulated his own basic 'answer' extremely unambiguously: 'Though unreceptive to the logic of reason, it [the USSR] is extremely sensitive to the logic of force.'"

-- "A secret chiefs of staff document dated March 27, 1946 which was devoted to the formulation of US military-political strategy for the postwar period said: 'Our government must bring pressure to bear to see that a disputed issue is speedily settled by political means while at the same time carrying out all preparations in order to strike the first blow should the need arise.'"

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Trofimenko summarizes that "such were the foundations of the military and political planning and of the global strategy which U.S. imperialism tried to pursue in the first two decades after the end of World War II." In this use of declassified official documents to substantiate propaganda arguments, the Soviets have good cards, and articles such as Trofimenko's serve as a useful occasional reminder that they pay close attention to those cards and play them skillfully.

In your conversations concerning the release of intelligence documents or other classified papers, you may wish to draw on the above case as an example in which old, seemingly harmless material is used against us.

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